

The Butler Weekly Times.

VOL. XIV.

BUTLER, MISSOURI, WEDNESDAY MAY 4, 1892.

NO. 24

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SILVER QUESTION.

What is its Origin and What its Status.

A History of the Manner and the Reason Why it is now a Political Leader.

National Democrat.

What is the free silver question which equally interests democrats and republicans?

What was its origin and what has led to its present consequence?

It will be the purpose of this article to answer, as far as may be possible, the questions propounded above, taking no sides but simply making a fair and equitable statement of the case as it understood by its opponents and advocates. It is one of the most important questions before the country, and should be treated with perfect impartiality and even justice.

The silver question had its rise in two great causes—the necessity for more currency for one thing, and the desire to divide the republican party on some issue that did not involve old time democratic issues, and had nothing to do with either the war or the tariff. Consequently, it may not improperly be denominated a shrewd political question having its foundation in the desire of the west and south for an increase of our monetary facilities, and more currency for actual use among the people.

The question of resuming specie payment was settled by the act of 1871. It was made certain when the senate passed Mr. Allison's bill and the house that of Mr. Bland, both looking to the same end. When that bill or rather the joint measure became a law the paper dollar was perhaps one third of a cent under par. Resumption had about come of its own accord, as nobody doubted the United States government's ability to pay its obligations in coin of either metal if it was so desired.

HOW THE SILVER QUESTION STARTED.

The west especially was, to borrow a new but very expressive term, "booming." New railways were being constructed—not to centers of population, but right through the wilderness, where the Indian war trail was almost fresh on the sand. Great masses of immigrants followed these new iron pathways from civilization to the wilderness. Railroads were built, and the people followed their trend. We altered the usages of the older countries, where the people had to ask a corporation to build a road before it came. The American reversed the old conditions. He built his road and the population followed after.

All this took enormous sums of money. It had to be cash, for steel rails were high and must be paid for

on delivery. The armies of laborers received their wages either every Saturday night or fortnightly. Everything in these great enterprises was conducted on a ready money basis. Here was the first call for more ready money. The democratic party was the first of the two mighty political organizations to see the wisdom of endeavoring to meet this call in a practical, sensible way, by supplying the demand for more money. The first movement in this direction was made by Gov. Seymour, of New York. He made a speech as early as 1868, in which he expressed himself as in favor paying the interest on the United States bonded debt and the principal, too, in greenbacks, the same money that had been current all through the war then so lately ended. The idea at once became popular. The republican party tried to steal it, but it was so clearly a democratic measure that on it Seymour carried the state of New York by a handsome democratic majority.

The real and original purpose of the shrewd democrats was served. They had raised an issue, wholly unconnected either with ante-bellum politics or the war, that did split up the republicans to a very great extent. The "greenback" idea—whatever we may think of it now—served its purpose, excellently well. It raised a question in which the war did not figure. The demand for more money became general. It was held to be a democratic issue, and that party made its first gains in the east mainly on this issue. For the first time in years, the legislature of Pennsylvania was democratic, and John Scott and W. A. Wallace both democrats, were elected to the United States senate.

THE BEGINNING OF THE SILVER MOVEMENT.

Meantime the railways had got into the mighty ranges of the backbone of the North American continent, the Rocky mountains. In Colorado, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Wyoming, in fact about all the newly opened territories vast deposits of silver were discovered. It had long been known that these territories were full of all sorts of mineral wealth, but with no means of transportation at hand, it was impossible to develop any mining interest. The greenbacker of 1868 became the silver man of 1877 and the years later. "Why here is a basis for enlarging the amount of currency in circulation," said these agitators for more money. "Let us utilize the products of our mines, and place gold and silver upon an equality of value."

The idea grew. Silver had always been a favorite with Americans. It was probably older in the world's history of precious metals than gold. In the Bible, where the two are mentioned together, silver usually pre-

cedes gold. "Silver or gold have I none," said the Master, "but such as I have I give unto thee."

As we have said, the sentiment in favor of an abundant silver coinage grew. Its first victory in the national legislature was the passage in 1878 of the Bland bill in the house, and its equivalent introduced by Mr. Allison in the senate. This was the act that provided for the issue of our present silver certificate, based on deposit of silver coin, which immediately relieved the money stringency to such a degree that congress deemed it wise to go a little further. Through the act of 1878, introduced and pressed to passage in the house by Mr. Bland, of Missouri, was a democratic measure, the republicans were unwilling that their opponents should have all the glory and political advantage that accrued from the silver law of 1878, for in 1890 they aided the democrats to pass "the 54,000,000 ounce" law, or the act authorizing the United States treasurer to purchase in the open market that quantity of silver bullion each year, and upon it to issue notes representing the equivalent value of the bullion coined and deposited in the vaults of the treasury.

Thus far, the silver movement had met with favor generally from business men all over the country. In the south especially the coinage idea was popular. The negro laborer knew what a silver dollar meant, for his earliest notions of money was derived from the day, when as a boy, his old master had tossed him a quarter for some little service. It was bulky to be sure, but the colored laborer liked to feel his money's weight. Its ponderosity seemed to insure its value and give it dignity that a bit of green paper never could attain.

It has been said that the silver coinage act of 1890 was generally received with favor among business men. But when it was proposed to throw open the gates and pass a bill for the free, unlimited and unrestricted coinage of silver on the basis of sixteen to one—as compared with gold—some of the ablest business men in the country, regardless of party, began to fear that we were going too far. They said if Europe would take our silver as it did our gold, there would not be the slightest objection to making as many silver dollars as the metal would turn out. But Europe, as yet, will not do this. The opponents of unlimited coinage said we did not want a circulating medium that nobody outside our own government would accept. It is to reach some agreement with other nations, that an attempt is being made to have an international monetary conference called with a view to reaching an understanding in regard to this silver question.

SILVER IN THE PRESENT CONGRESS.

When the present, or fifty second congress was organized Mr. Bland, the author of the act of 1878, was appointed chairman of the committee on coinage to which would be referred the bills relative to the coinage of the two metals. There were a great many of them so introduced and so referred. From the mass of these bills Mr. Bland composed a bill incorporating into it such features of the bills referred to his committee as he thought were advantageous, which he reported to the house in the latter days of February. It provides for the free coinage of silver and gold at the legal ratio, and also that the owner of either gold or silver in bullion shall be able to present it at any United States mint and receive coin notes—such as provided for in the act of 1890—which shall be a legal tender for all debts, public or private. Finally, as a concession to the scientific bi-metalists of France, which, up to this time has used about as much silver in coinage as the United States, when that nation shall open its mints to free coinage

at the rate of 15 1/2 to 1, the United States will adopt that ratio, too. This is the Bland bill over which there has been so much discussion and difference of opinion in both parties.

It is not the purpose of this article to enter into any discussion of the merits the case. Unfortunately for the silver question, the chairman of the ways and means committee, Mr. Springer, as titular leader of the democratic house, made a great mistake. At a banquet given by the New York chamber of commerce Mr. Springer, speaking as leader of the house, stated that the present congress would not pass a free coinage bill, and all that would be done by the house would be the adoption of a resolution providing for an international conference looking to an agreement in regard to the coinage of silver and gold. Mr. Bland held that in making such a statement, at the time and place where it was made, Mr. Springer had trespassed on his official rights as chairman of the coinage committee. Mr. Springer probably never thought of doing any such thing, but the speech aroused Mr. Bland to bitter resentment, which has done much to keep the feeling between the silver and the anti-silver men at its present tension.

WHY THE SILVER BILL WAS DEFEATED.

It may be interesting to consider the real cause, with so many members really favorable to silver legislation, of the silver bill's defeat. It was not that southern or western members had changed their opinion, or been intimidated by any cause from voting their real sentiments. But the conviction that the democratic party might lose its hold in New England and seriously injure its standing in New York induced the men from the south and west to relinquish their personal preferences for the good of the democratic party in the coming elections. It was the opinion of some of the wisest heads in the democratic councils, men like Gorman, Jones of Ark., and Carlisle that the chances of the party for success were almost certain, anything that weakened them or placed them in jeopardy to any degree must be avoided, no matter how strong personal opinion might be in favor of such a thing. It was a wise conclusion that determined upon this course. It shows the homogeneity of the democracy all over the country, and the willingness of its leaders to sacrifice personal views or inclinations to the general welfare and prospects of party success. This is the true democratic spirit, and with such a feeling imbuing the hearts of its leaders there will be none of the irreconcilable difficulties that threaten our opponents. Just now the brainiest and most daring young men in the republican party are looking about for somebody to nominate in place of Mr. Harrison, whom nobody seems to want. With this feeling pervading the ranks of the opposition and with the silver question for the present remitted democratic success seems more than reasonably sure.

WILLIAM HUGH ROBERTS.

Pleasant Gap Musings.

The click of the corn planter is now heard in the land, and the farmer is industriously preparing to feed the millionaire through another winter. Mrs. Joe Ellington, who has been suffering for some time past with a felon on her thumb is some better. Uncle Ike Seifers was stricken down with paralysis last Monday and it was at first feared would prove fatal, but he is improving nicely now. Rome will hold in Pleasant Gap the 14th of May, the time set to vote on the site for the new school house. I W Brooks has opened up his "bar" not of booze, but of queensware which is now on sale at his store. The big bass voice of Squire Campbell's supper bell still resounds through the streets and alleys of Pleasant Gap. Any one desiring to trade horses or bet on the election will do well to call on Bud Henry as he is known to be

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a game man, one who never refuses a bet nor a horse trade. Geo. Walker must be planting the whole south prairie in corn this year, judging from the number of trips he has made out north for seed corn. J. L. Rogers of Vernon county, was up on a visit to his parents, the last of the week. Next Saturday is convention day, and McGinty is of the opinion that Pleasant Gap township will send a solid delegation for both Stone and Harper. It was said that Mr. Kown and Bud Henry went off with the gypsies, but we are inclined to believe it is a bit take.

McGINTY.

Virginia Items.

Mrs. H. D. Henderson of Foster is home on a visit. Little folks see Benny Durrett's bicycle he got from Chicago before buying; Ben can give you full particulars. Dr. J. J. Mitchell is in Kansas City. Morton Jenkins is in the blacksmith shop with his uncle in Kansas City. Tom Wright has just returned from the Nation where he has taken up a claim of 160 acres of as fine land as ever a crow flew over. Tom dug a well, planted corn and after being on his claim one week was offered the Bill Stephens farm for it. John T. Hensley went down to get a claim but failed. Girls look out for Ed Dudley, he has a new cart, horse and harness, but don't fight over it as Ed is accommodating and will let you all ride. C. H. Morrison has half a ton of good bright prairie hay for sale. George Thompson has more of the same kind for sale. John Hedger is having his house painted; that's right John, for it looked like you had neglected it for some time. A J. Park is letting out lots of corn this spring and on easy and fair terms. Charley Kinney of the south part of the state is home on a visit. Miss Sarah Oldham is rather down in the mouth hearing that her Johnny B. has made his life time choice. Marion Kennedy is talking of going to Illinois to visit his brother. For picket fence machines call on Ed Dudley.

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"When I was 14 years of age I had a severe attack of rheumatism, and after I recovered had to go on crutches. A year later, scrofula, in the form of white swellings, appeared on various parts of my body, and for 11 years I was an invalid, being confined to my bed. In that time ten or eleven sores appeared and broke, causing me great pain and suffering. I feared I never should get well. Early in 1886 I went to Chicago to visit a sister, but was confined to my bed most of the time I was there. In July I read a book, 'A Day with a Circus,' in which were statements of cures by Hood's Sarsaparilla. I was so impressed with the success of this medicine that I decided to try it. To my great gratification the sores soon decreased, and I began to feel better and in a short time I was up and out of doors. I continued to take Hood's Sarsaparilla for about a year, when, having used six bottles, I had become so fully released from the disease that I went to work for the Flint & Walling Mfg. Co., and since then HAVE NOT LOST A SINGLE DAY on account of sickness. I believe the disease is expelled from my system, I always feel well, am in good spirits and have a good appetite. I am now 27 years of age and can walk as well as any one, except that one limb is a little shorter than the other, owing to the loss of bone, and the sores formerly on my right leg. To my friends my recovery seems almost miraculous, and I think Hood's Sarsaparilla is the King of Medicines." WILLIAM A. LEWIS, 3 N. Railroad St., Kendallville, Ind.

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